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March \_\_, 2007

# D.C. Voting Rights: Myth vs. Fact

## *Get Beyond the FICTION. Do the Right Thing.*

Dear Colleague,

Leading up to the vote on H.R 1433, the D.C. House Voting Rights Bill, I want to ask you to carefully consider the facts surrounding D.C., Congress and how they relate to each other. I hope you'll find, as I have, that Congress has the power and the responsibility to right this historic wrong.

Tom Davis

***Myth:***

The Utah provision, providing for an at-large member, is unconstitutional, as no other residents have ever had the right to vote for 2 members of congress.

***Fact:***

On many occasions in the past, such as in Maryland during the 1960s, when state legislatures have been unable to agree on the boundaries of a new congressional district, there have in fact been at-large elections, so that citizens voted for their own district member and an at-large member as well. In fact, until 1849, 7 states voted for all of their members of congress at-large. CRS has concluded the at-large provision is constitutional.

***Myth:***

The District of Columbia is just like Puerto Rico or Guam as a Federal Enclave, and should not be singled out to receive a voting Member in Congress.

***Fact:***

What makes the District of Columbia unique is that we're here! This is the seat of government, whose residents pay income taxes. It is totally distinct from other entities that have non-voting representatives. The Constitution grants Congress authority over the territories in Article 4. The District Clause powers are vested in Article 1.